

## MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #82, 26 & 27 August 2008

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes/ Meetings– A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 26 & 27 August 2008 at the LaCrescent American Legion in LaCrescent, MN. Attached is the attendance list [Attachment 81-2] from the meeting. Following introductions, the Minutes from RRF #81 were approved as prepared. The next meeting is scheduled for 2 & 3 December 2008 in the Twin Cities area (exact location TBD due to construction at the MN Valley Refuge Office).

2. Agency Activities – Note: Only the agencies listed below had significant information to report.

- A. COE (Tapp): The dredge quarters barge, Taggatz, arrived to Fountain City Service Base on 28 July. The first job was Lansing Upper light on 2 Aug. There is no date scheduled yet for the christening ceremony. The MN Marine Art Museum in Winona, MN needs to assure they can financially maintain the dredge Thompson as required by MN SHPO before they accept the boat. The MV Mississippi was in the St. Paul District from 6-12 Aug. There were positive comments by the Commissioners about the working relationships between the agencies and the St. Paul District based on the public meeting comments in Red Wing. Employees have been deployed to IA to assist in flood recovery. During the National Republican Convention in St. Paul from 1-4 Sept, the COL has encouraged district office employees to telework. Don Powell is retiring on 2 Sept and Tom Novak will replace him on EMP Project. There is no PM replacement yet on other C&H projects.  
(Wilcox): Xcel Energy held a meeting regarding Prairie Island Nuclear plant environmental issues that was attended by the agencies. Xcel is reapplying for a permit to reoperate the plant for 20 years. It could take up to 2 years to complete the NEPA document.
- B. FWS (Sullins): The FWS Regional Directors were in LaCrosse on 6 Aug and appreciated the help members of the RRF provided during the tour of Pool 8 on the Island Girl. They were very impressed by the river and the partnership amongst the agencies. Robin Thoreson transferred to Region 1; Tom Melious will replace her in Oct. There are cutbacks with the agency, but they will continue to support the RRF.  
(Stefanski): The Mathy 75 acre tract in Brice Prairie has been acquired for the future visitor center. They are still working on an additional parcel of land for a total of 180 acres. Looking to purchase 5-1/2 acre parcel of land south of Nelson for an observation deck. There will be an open house on 19 & 20 Sep to discuss the Big Lake hunting boundaries in the Pool 4 closed area. There are new trapping regulations. The Pool 8 public tour of the new islands on 26 Aug was a huge success and thanks for all those who helped. There were over 300 people.  
(Wege): The primary propagation cage for Higgins Eye mussels at Frontenac has been taken over by zebra mussels so the site has been relocated near the casino in Pool 3.

- C. IA DNR (Konrad): The long term monitoring program was approved. They have been dealing with the summer flooding in IA. Employees assisted the RR in the train wreck south of Guttenberg, IA to help minimize environmental impacts. Pool Slough EMP project received damage from flood and repairs will be paid for by EMP funds between Corps and IADNR. The IA River was a 800-yr flood event and the Miss River was over a 100-yr flood event.
- E. MN DNR (Wooden): Preparing for the MN State Fair and the National Republican Convention. Local opposition to the development of the Southport Placement site. The St. Paul Port Authority is mitigating for 22 acres of wetland somewhere in St. Paul for developing the Southport Placement Site. MN DNR is satisfied with wetland mitigation plan proposed by SPPA for developing the site.  
(Schlagenhaft): Met with St. Paul District staff on Root River floodplain restoration.  
(Johnson): There was a RR derailment in Houston County at Crooked Creek in which 23 cars fell into the wetland. 4 cars were loaded with ethanol and one was leaking. Two temporary roads were constructed through the wetlands for access that will need to be removed and the wetlands restored. Pinnacle Engineering is doing the environmental tests with results coming soon to the agencies.
- F. MPCA (Mader): The silt curtains and booms that were installed at the RR derailment at Crooked Creek were not properly installed.
- G. WI DNR (Benjamin): The letter sent to COL Sinkler, MVR, regarding the interaction between NESP and the RRF was distributed and discussed [Attachment 82-3]. Their Water Division has a deficit of \$1.2M, but it does not affect the river funds.
- H. WI DOT (Kieck): The deadline for harbor applications was 1 Aug. There were 8 submitted for a total request of \$13.2M, but there is only \$7M available. All applicants came from the Great Lakes area. Waiting for approval announcement of a local harbor applicant.
- J. LMRWD (Schwalbe): Working with MN DNR on Seminary Fen in Chaska; dedication will be on 1 Oct, looking for new acquisition; 18 acres may be available. Dredged MN River this past month and used the new Cargill East River Placement site and it was fairly successful. Funding the 9-foot channel is in jeopardy. Some manager's want funding across the board and other managers want a special assessment. In order to have a special assessment, a unanimous vote is needed from the managers. The district is pursuing the MN River Basin Commission. The Cargill East River placement site has capacity for approximately 10 years based on the current dredging quantities, but the MN DNR wants the material removed sooner than that. They are also working on contracting for the access across the ditch to the site. They are concerned about the potential for contaminated material from the MN River being placed at the site and who is responsible for the added costs for the removal of the material. The MN River was tested last year at 5 sites with report due by 1 Jan. Black Dog is planning a cooling project with construction of an island in the middle of the lake.

### 3. Water Level Management (Schlagenhaft)

#### A. Drawdowns

- (1) Pool 6 – The agencies decided to cancel the drawdown for 2008 due to high water. As a Lesson Learned, they would like to revise the EA to cover more than one year. They would like to do a drawdown in 2009. The FWS provided funds for mussel surveys.

- (2) Pool 3 – Available funds are limited. UMRCC completed the vegetation survey. An advisory committee for the TMDL is being formed and may also be used for drawdown's.
- (3) Pools 5 & 8 – Thanked FWS for providing funds for vegetation study.
- (4) Meeting to discuss feasibility of adaptive management plan with drawdown's is scheduled for Sep.

4. Floodplain Restoration (Schlagenhaft)

- A handout [Attachment 82-4] was distributed which provided a draft plan for creating a task force. Looking at a systematic approach. Presented to NECC and was well responded to. Gretchen Benjamin said we may need a group of interested parties between St. Paul and Rock Island Districts but need someone to lead and push the group along. Mike Griffin stated this is one of the 18 PDT's in NESP. Tim Schlagenhaft will draft a letter from the RRF along with Jeff DeZellar verbally requesting through NESP.

5. Environmental Management Program (Powell)

- A. 2008 budget – MVP received \$3.5M. Money spent on 4 projects: construction of Pool 8 Ph III and Clear Lake and DPR's for Harpers and Capoli Slough.
- B. FY09 Budget – Presidents Budget is \$20M, House \$20M, Senate \$18M. Expecting continuing resolution so budget would remain the same as FY08.
- C. FY08 Construction Update
  - (1) Pool 8 Phase III: Stage 2A – M&R completed the other half of N1 and four seed islands in mid-Aug; Stage 2B – L.W. Matteson constructing base bid and two options. Awaiting contractor's proposal for third option (this was received after the meeting was held and the cost was too high; therefore it will not be awarded under this contract).
  - (2) Clear Lake – Contract was awarded 29 Jul to Sunflower Enterprises. Funding is cost shared: \$160M from O&M and \$110M from EMP.
- D. Planning and Design – Complete DPR's for Capoli Slough and Harpers Slough then convert to NESP when funds are available.
- E. Dan Wilcox is working on completion reports.
- F. EMP – NESP: Jeff DeZellar will work on integration between EMP and NESP. Public outreach for Pool 8 PhIII Stage 2B project. Not sure about increase in project costs due to unknowns about reporting process under NESP.

6. Channel Maintenance Program [Attachment 82-5]

- A. Dredging (Cottrell): Reviewed dredging schedule. New mechanical dredging contractor is Newt Marine Inc from Dubuque, IA and they have subcontracted a second plant to L&S Marine.
- B. Channel Placement Site Schedule (Lund): Reviewed the placement site activities. Provided an update on the Fisher and Corps Island future unloading projects. Scot Johnson would like the Corps to pursue the island construction in North and Sturgeon Lakes.
- C. Channel Management (Machajewski): Reviewed the channel management activities. Looking for suggestions on relocating the buoy below LD8. WI DNR suggested the power line site.

7. Navigation Work Group (Machajewski)

A. NESP Barge Fleeting Study - There were impressions that fleeting areas conflict with fish areas.

B. Bridges

(1) RR – There are three alternative plans but consensus has been to leave the bridge in the same location; however, RIAC still needs to provide input. Funding still needed before construction starts.

(2) Hastings – There are three alternatives proposed. Planning 2010 construction.

(3) I-90 - There are six alternatives proposed. Planning 2012 construction.

(4) Lowry – The bridge is closed and still moving on bearing pads. Planning 2009 construction.

C. Red Wing Boat docks – There is only 80 feet of channel between docks and channel. Regulatory office working on issue with permitting.

F. Fleeting Study – Marc Schultz asked if local fleeting was involved.

8. Sediment Testing (Mader) – There is a new dredge guidance out in which there has been some concern. There is also a new dredge permit employee with MPCA that Judy Mader will to explain the difference between Corps and private dredging. A P2 guidance was developed. Not best to use Tier 1 for upland development. Expectations of core sampling for dredging and is now posted on website. Dennis Anderson requested Judy Mader reissue a permit for dredge sampling. There shouldn't be any changes to Corps dredging. The Corps has a permit from MPCA; it deals more with placement of material below the Ordinary High Water Mark and discharge for hydraulic dredging. NESP and EMP projects are not included in the permit. If testing yearly, they are ok as long as they dredge to same depth and not deeper. All permits required for 30 day public review period, after sent to Corps for review. Terry Schwalbe would like to set up meeting with industry to have Judy Mader explain permits, testing, and guidance procedures. Kevin Baumgard recommended Judy Mader attend UMWA meeting to discuss testing.

9. Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program (DeZellar)

A. FY09 Budget - \$10M in House, \$3M in Senate. Expecting to be under a continuing resolution; therefore, the smaller of the two amounts will be appropriated, and will then apply for a waiver. Developing budgets based on three scenarios (\$3M, \$5M, and \$8M)

B. RRF sent a letter to COL Sinkler, Rock Island District, and it had great impact on budget. RRF should be commended for pro-active stand on RRF-NESP Interaction issue.

C. Projects - Waterlevel Management, Pool 2 Wing Dams, LD 8 Embankment Lowering, and Forest Management. There is only PED funds available, no CG funds.

D. Documents [Attachment 82-6]

(1) Discussed Key Characteristics of RRF. Need comments to document to Chuck Spitzak, MVR, by 4 Sep. Suggestion to add a History paragraph and Endorsement paragraph to document.

(2) IL River Work Group Proposal – Review and comment.

(3) Integration Paper – Need to be a high priority for Corps and this paper should be the background document that would be sent to Congress. Gretchen Benjamin suggested EMP should not end unless NESP funds are high enough to take over program.

E. Martin Konrad stated Gen Walsh wants to change the name of NESP to Mississippi River Sustainability Program.

10. Fish & Wildlife Work Group (Anderson)

A. Meetings - Have not met since the Geomorphic Reach 3 Workshop in May; however, the next meeting is scheduled for 22 Sep. Plan to discuss small scale projects which has been led by Scot Johnson. Will provide more details and direction the group is going at Dec RRF.

B. NESP Objective Setting (Wilcox) – Will go through Regional Support Team (RST) group; working on draft planning which will outline objective setting reports; may have info to present to FWWG at Sep meeting.

C. White Paper [Attachment 82-7] – Cost for modeling and quantifying sediment was reviewed by Dan Wilcox and Jon Hendrickson. They prepared a draft SOW which will cost \$108K. The SOW will be distributed at the Sep FWWG meeting for comments.

This will be a joint effort with the RWG.

11. Recreation Work Group (Berg)

A. Beach Plans

(1) Pool 9 – Draft plan was distributed to RWG for review. Most comments have been incorporated into plan with some comments open for discussion at next RWG meeting.

(2) Pool 10 - OSIT met in Jul to discuss all beaches. Need to put notes together and plan to draft a plan for comments by end of Oct 08.

B. UMRCC – Scot Johnson has done a super job with work plan and leading the group.

C. Benjamin stated during the MV Miss Public Meeting there were lots of public comments about wave erosion in the Red Wing area.

12. Misc

A. Gretchen Benjamin stated Fred in Pool 3 has called looking for dredged material to extend a beach in Diamond Bluff. An OSIT will be held in conjunction when there is another meeting scheduled in that area.

B. Marc Schultz stated LaCrosse Harbor put a “No Wake Zone” at Riverside Park. This was a warning this summer and noticed a distinctive difference in waves this summer.

Steve Tapp  
Co-Chairman, RRF

Att:

82-1 Agenda

82-2 Attendance Sheet

82-3 RRF - NESP Integration Paper

82-4 Floodplain Coordination Task Force

82-5 CMC Channel Mgmt Schedule

82-6 Key Characteristics of the RRF

82-7 Draft SOW for Bank Erosion